

Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee

Tuesday, March 20, 2012

Archie Cole Middle School Library

100 Cedar Avenue

East Greenwich, RI 02818

7:06p.m. Regular Meeting

Those in attendance were: Dr. Deidre Gifford, Chair; Mr. Robert Durant, Vice-Chair; Mr. David Green; Mr. Jack Sommer; Mrs. Susan Records, and Mr. Paul Martin. Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters was absent. Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent; Mrs. Paula Dillon, Assistant Superintendent, and Mrs. Maryanne Crawford, Director of Administration were also present.

7:06p.m. Regular Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Deidre Gifford, Chair.

I. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

II. Public Comments

Ms. Bambi Lukens had questions regarding the offering of additional languages in the schools. Dr. Gifford explained the World Language Committee made a series of recommendations at previous School Committee meetings and the next phase of the process has not begun. Mrs. Tricia Colgan discussed a flyer that was sent home to students offering a free 10-week course in Chinese. Thirteen

students signed up in two days. Mrs. Sally Miranda asked questions regarding the starting date of school and whether all schools need to be closed for the Primary and General Election.

III. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular and executive for 2/28/12

On a motion by Mr. Green, which was seconded by Mr. Sommer, the Regular and Executive minutes for 2/28/12 were approved 4-0 with Mr. Durant and Mr. Martin abstaining.

b. Regular and executive for 3/6/12

On a motion by Mr. Durant, which was seconded by Mr. Green, the Regular and Executive minutes for 3/6/12 were approved 5-0 with Dr. Gifford abstaining.

IV. Recognitions

The following recognitions were made and students were commended for their work:

a. Cole Math Counts Competition- Zane Yu, Ben Acker, Katharine Yan, and Giulio Cataldo

b. Cole 2012 American Math Competition-Zane Yu, Katharine Yan, and Ryan Teng

V. Superintendent's Report

The high school library has been open late Monday through Thursday from 2:00-4:00 p.m. to accommodate students. Fifteen to twenty students have been staying each day. A follow-up meeting will be set up with U.R.I. to discuss their Flagship program and the possibility of offering Mandarin at Cole. Dr. Mercurio will report later in the spring. Dr. Mercurio and Mrs. Dillon attended a collaborative

learning outcome meeting with other former SORICO districts regarding Race to the Top. Mrs. Dillon gave a presentation on East Greenwich's work involving teacher evaluation and curriculum development. Her presentation centered on animating technology and streamlining processes for efficiency and communication.

VI. School Committee Concerns

Mr. Martin discussed the annual School Committee Scholarship. He discussed the healthcare buy-back that is offered to School Committee members and questioned whether the members who do not take advantage of medical insurance would consider donating their buyback. He would like to discuss this at a future meeting.

VII. Action Items

Mr. Martin made a motion to approve the appointments listed below. Mr. Durant noted the appointments should be contingent on the coaches getting proper certification. Mr. Martin restated the motion noting the appointments are contingent on the coaches receiving the proper certification. Mr. Durant seconded the motion and the vote was 6-0. Dr. Gifford thanked Mr. Cobain for his work in obtaining all of the proper certifications for coaches and volunteers.

a. Appointments

- 1.Asst Coach Boys' Lacrosse-EGHS-Chris Callahan**
- 2.Asst Coach Girls' Lacrosse-EGHS-Jillian Brown**
- 3.Asst Coach Boys' Baseball-EGHS-Ryan DePasquale**
- 4.Asst Coach Girls' Softball-EGHS-Kerri Fuller**
- 5.Head Coach Boys' Tennis-EGHS-Marisa Salvadore**
- 6.Volunteer-EGHS Boys' Baseball-Scott Woodward**

7.Volunteer-EGHS Boys' Baseball-Steve Whittaker

8.Vounteer-EGHS Girls' Softball-Doug Mainiero

9.Volunteer-EGHS Boys' Lacrosse-Bruce Roberts

10. Volunteer-Cole Boys' Baseball-Chris Pilling

11. Volunteer-Cole Girls' Softball-Chris Soucie

b. School Committee Resolution – Binding Arbitration

c. School Committee Resolution-Contract Continuation

Dr. Gifford noted resolutions #b and #c are identical to those proposed last year.

She asked that the bill numbers listed in the resolution be verified and the vote contingent on the verification of the number and the fiscal year consistent with the proposed legislation. Mr. Durant made a motion to approve resolutions #b and #c contingent on the verification that the bill number and fiscal year are consistent with the proposed legislation. Mr. Green seconded the motion and the motion carried 6-0.

d. Sabbatical request for 2012-2013-Christina O' Day

Ms. O'Day was present to discuss her request. The Committee asked if there is specific certification needed to teach Arabic and questioned whether Ms. O'Day would be certified at the end of her sabbatical. Ms. O'Day said she believes most states offer emergency certification. Dr. Mercurio noted there is usually a cost to the district for emergency certification. Mrs. Dillon suggested that Ms. O'Day contact RIDE regarding a transcript review and also get clarification on the certification needed. The Committee also had several questions regarding the cost of the sabbatical and whether the

curriculum will support teaching Arabic. Mrs. Crawford said the cost to pay one-half of Ms. O'Day's salary, benefits, and the cost of hiring a one-year substitute, is between \$35,000 and \$50,000. Ms. O'Day stated that she has applied for grants to fund a full year sabbatical, but is willing to take a half year sabbatical if the grant is not awarded.

She also noted she can audit the classes. Mr. Martin noted his concerns as to how long a teacher must stay in the district after returning from a sabbatical. Dr. Mercurio read the specifications from the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Mr. Martin made a motion to approve the sabbatical. No member seconded the motion. This item will appear on the next School Committee agenda.

e. Retirement-Janet Volpe, Frenchtown

f. Retirement-Carol Alfano, Frenchtown

On a motion by Mr. Durant, which was seconded by Mr. Green, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the retirements. The retirees will be recognized at a future meeting.

g. Approval of School Calendar 2012-2013

Dr. Mercurio explained that he met with the bargaining units before drafting the calendar. The September holidays are aligned with Warwick Career and Vo-Tech Center. The Committee asked Dr. Mercurio to find out if the fire station and Swift Community Center can be used for the Primary Election (rather than using Frenchtown). Schools must be closed for the General Election. Mr. Durant asked if there are legal requirements for two vacation weeks (during February and April). Dr. Gifford noted that private schools take the two weeks together. However, many athletic events occur during the vacation

breaks. The current calendar draft includes an early dismissal so Cole teachers can take part in senior project judging. Dr. Gifford asked Dr. Mercurio to look at other options for senior project rather than an early dismissal for Cole. Dr. Mercurio will look into other options and bring the calendar back for approval.

h. Meadowbrook Bid Approval

Mr. Sullivan, of SBS, discussed the bid results for the Meadowbrook Construction Project. Four bids were received with a \$297,000 range. The project budget is \$3,200,000 and the lowest bidder is Tower Construction at \$2,030,000 which includes the base bid of \$2,024,000 and two alternate add-ons: alternate #1 for \$3,500 and alternate #2 for \$2,500. Mr. Sullivan met with Tower Construction yesterday to clarify the scope of the bid. Tower Construction has not done any work for the East Greenwich School District, but has completed projects in the range of \$100,000 to \$5,000,000. The budget covers the roof, floor, corridors, controls, and contingencies.

Parents in the audience asked questions regarding the abatement process taking place while students are in school and asked if the work can be postponed. Mr. Sommer asked Mr. Sullivan if safety has been addressed with precautionary measures since the students will be in school. Mr. Sullivan replied that safety was addressed. Dr. Gifford noted the abatement process is tightly controlled and monitored by the health department. Mr. Sullivan noted there can be a work stop if there are problems or concerns.

Mr. Martin stated he is not sure this is the solution and opposes

approving the bid and would like to see it deferred. Dr. Gifford, Dr. Mercurio, Mr. Winakur of SBS, and Mr. Gowell of the Building Committee will be meeting on Thursday to discuss the Meadowbrook project and the safety issues discussed this evening. Mr. Sullivan said the project will be completely contained and three classrooms will be renovated at a time. Construction is slated to begin the day after school ends- June 19. Dr. Gifford understands the concerns of the Meadowbrook families and would like their questions answered with all parties present (Health Department, SBS, and Tower Construction). Meadowbrook parent Mr. Decawich asked about the possibility of moving Meadowbrook to Potowamut School. Dr. Mercurio explained that Potowamut has been vacant for more than a year and has since been turned over to the municipality. It is no longer considered a school building and would need to undergo a process to get the building up to code which may cost upwards of \$300,000-\$500,000. Mr. Durant stated the Meadowbrook project was approved with the current timeline months ago and this project was discussed extensively at School Committee meetings. He added that other options can be discussed after the bid is approved so that construction can move forward during the summer months. Dr. Gifford gave a commitment to parents to make sure health and safety concerns are addressed. On a motion by Mr. Durant, which was seconded by Mr. Green, the Committee voted 5-1 (with Mr. Martin voting no) to approve the bid for Tower Construction.

i. Budget FY2013

There is a joint Town Council and School Committee meeting on

Monday, April 9th to discuss the budget. The public hearing for the town is Thursday, April 12th. The School Committee will have the Town Council's input in time for the April 3rd School Committee meeting.

j. Cole Tennis Presentation

Mr. Raissi explained the proposed Cole Tennis Program noting sixty students have already signed up. This program will be a competitive program with other middle schools in the state. Twenty students will be selected to form a co-ed team. This program will be self-funded by parents and bus transportation will be included in the membership fee. Mr. Cobain noted this group will be considered a "club" and the insurance will be the same as other school clubs. Mr. Durant made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Martin to approve the Cole Tennis Club, which is self-funded, contingent on all volunteers receiving a BCI check and following the protocol for school volunteers. The motion passed 6-0.

VIII. Update on East Greenwich High School Dug-outs

Mr. Hopkins discussed the proposal for dug-outs noting the project will be privately funded through parents and other donations. Mr. Hopkins has approximately \$4,500 in the bank and has a total commitment of \$15,000 which does not include donations from parents. Materials for two dug-outs are \$9,284.81 using Melidossian Masonry. Total cost with labor is estimated at \$18,000. The Committee discussed their concerns regarding liability and approving a project that is not fully funded. Mr. Hopkins said he is in the process of campaigning and Coach Downey will be scheduling a

meeting for a major fundraiser. Mr. Hopkins was asked if the contractor will complete the work if full payment is not made. He said he would. Mr. Sommer asked Mr. Hopkins to get a letter from Melidossian Masonry stating they will complete the work and extend credit for the materials and labor (noting the amount they will extend) even if total payment is not made. Dr. Gifford suggested the Committee ask the town for a commitment of impact fees to back up the project. Dr. Gifford noted it is not prudent to approve a project that is not fully funded. Dr. Mercurio asked if approval can be granted contingent upon approval from the town, as well as a timeline for completion of both dugouts even if they are completed through a credit process. Mr. Sommer made a motion to approve building the dug-outs contingent on town/building committee approval and a letter from the general contractor guaranteeing completion within twenty-one days of ground breaking. Mr. Durant seconded the motion and it passed 5-1 with Dr. Gifford opposing.

IX. Discussion Items

a. Resource Officer at East Greenwich High School

Mr. Martin spoke with the East Greenwich Police Chief regarding hiring a resource officer at the high school. The Police Chief said he will fund \$25,000 towards the salary if the school district will pay the other \$25,000. Dr. Gifford asked Mr. Martin to make a proposal at the next School Committee meeting.

b. Update on Cole Facility Charge

The School Committee previously approved a charge for naming certain spaces within Cole.

The committee will be comprised of the Superintendent, Mrs. Winters, Mrs. Meyer, 2 faculty or staff members, and three community members. The district list serv will be used to reach out to community members. Dr. Mercurio will bring a recommendation to the School Committee the end of May/early June. Mr. Martin offered to be an alternate member for Mrs. Winters.

c. Music Program at Cole

On a motion by Mr. Durant, which was seconded by Mr. Sommer, the Committee voted 6-0 to table this item.

d. Grade Configuration

The cost of the re-configuration (for 2012-2013) will be discussed at the next meeting and a vote will be taken.

e. Fields' MOU

Dr. Mercurio gave the Committee the water usage history FY2008-FY2012. Mrs. Crawford gave the Committee the breakdown of field usage for 2012 spring. The final vote on the MOU will take place at the next meeting on April 3rd.

X. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Martin, which was seconded by Mr. Durant, the Committee voted 6-0 to adjourn at 9:43 p.m.

CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO
SECRETARY